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To President Roosevelt  
with regards of  
Geo F Hoar

*And  
1/12/1903*  
SPEECH

OF

HON. GEORGE F. HOAR,

*11-32024*

OF MASSACHUSETTS,

DECEMBER 22, 1902,

AT THE BANQUET OF THE

NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY,

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

AT PHILADELPHIA.

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WASHINGTON D. C.:  
THE SAXTON PRINTING CO.

1903



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# SPEECH.

DECEMBER 22, 1902.

That would be a cold heart indeed, that were not stirred to its depths by your kindly greeting. It has all the more value because I know that it comes wholly from your kindness, and not from any deserving of mine.

It is certainly a great delight, as it is a great honor and privilege, to unite with the dwellers in your famous and beautiful city, when they celebrate the Pilgrims. How it may be with other children I cannot tell. But the children of the Pilgrims love their memory all the better, the more they are separated from them by the space of time.

I suppose the men and women who are gathered about these tables are here by right of a personal kindred with the Pilgrims who came over with Bradford and Carver, and Brewster; or the Puritans who came over with Endicott or Winthrop. But Massachusetts can claim a property in Pennsylvania, and Boston can claim a property in Philadelphia by the great inheritance of character. If our community had made no other contribution to yours than Franklin and Horace Binney it would be enough reason for inviting New England men to a place in any great festival here.

But New England, the birth-place of American liberty, as has been said already, has also its peculiar relation to the birth-place of Independence. It was here, from 1774 to 1787, and again from 1789 to 1801, when Independence was won, when the Constitution was framed, when the great administrations of Washington and John Adams inaugurated the Constitution, that the men

of New England did their great work. Here Hancock signed his name in letters visible across the broad Atlantic. Here John Adams—the Colossus of debate—vindicated the Declaration against the hesitation of its opponents by his invincible argument. Here Sam Adams—king of men—controlled the greatest intellects of his time by his wise, broad and prevailing counsel. Here Ellsworth led the Senate and framed the Judiciary Act. Here John Adams took the chair as Vice President <sup>and President</sup> of the Senate. Here, later, he was clothed with the Presidential office. Here he commissioned Marshal. Here he incurred the resentment of his own party by sending the envoys which saved the infant Republic from war with France. Here the matchless argument and eloquence of Fisher Ames saved the good faith and honor of the Republic.

After the sufferings of the voyage, and after the first terrible winter, when of the hundred and one there were but seven at one time able to care for the sick and dying, and more than half the company died, yet not one went back to England in the ship in the spring, the life of our fathers and mothers was not, in general, one of physical hardship. Indeed, our luxuries were their common food. Wild geese, and wild turkeys, and wild ducks, venison, and Cotuit oysters (our brethren of Connecticut, who were then stricter in their theology than we were in Massachusetts, preferred “Bluepoints”), and harbor clams, and lobsters and salmon and shad, and brook trout, and every variety of fish, all the fowls of air, and all the fish of the stream and the pond and the sea, and berries and Indian corn were abundant on their tables. They were in constant danger of the wild beast and the savage until the end of King Philip’s war in August, 1676. Every mother in New England must have suffered the agony of daily and nightly terror for herself and her children. There were, it is said, ten thousand warriors organized by King Philip, who could issue out in little bands at any point from the forest to attack settlements extending over a large part of Connecticut, and Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, from the mouth of the Penobscot to New Haven, containing, all told, only about eighty thousand people. King Philip was an able and adroit savage. His plan

for the extermination of the white man was cunningly conceived. It was baffled only by the heroic and adventurous courage and skill of men, themselves disciplined by life in the forest, led by men trained in the great military school of which Cromwell was master.

The chief sorrow and suffering of the Pilgrim came from the fact that he was an exile. I do not believe that any man or woman who stayed at home in England, loved her with a more intense affection than these men who had left her for conscience's sake. Her beautiful fields, her hills and valleys, her rivers, with their very names so full of music, her stately homes, were dear to these men. They had been born and bred to a gentle life. There were more college-bred men in Massachusetts, and in Plymouth, by far, than could be found in any territory of like extent and population in England. The suffering that they encountered, that their children might live free, was suffering of the spirit and not of the body.

It once occurred to me that we could not be sure that it is an undiluted honor to be invited to speak in eulogy of our Pilgrim fathers and mothers on an occasion like this. Have you ever reflected, Mr. President, that the chief eulogists of the Pilgrim, since we began to celebrate this anniversary, have been, almost without exception, the men who had the least of the Pilgrim or the Puritan element in them, men who would not have been exiles, or reformers, or Pilgrims, under any provocation whatever.

Webster and Choate, and Everett and Winthrop have paid tribute to the Pilgrims better than any one else. They were great and useful men in their time. But they were all absolutely devoted to maintaining the existing order of things. But would not the Pilgrim have been a failure if that were not true? The social order which was the result of the suffering the Pilgrim endured was a social order fit to be maintained.

We best honor the Pilgrim when we reverently preserve and cherish the State which was the work of his hands. "Mere martyrdom," as was well said by a bright woman, "is generally a fault, and always a failure."<sup>6</sup> Martyrdom is bearing witness. It is a testimony given under the highest sanction known to humanity,



when the man beareth witness with blood, or life, or with what is dearer than heart's blood or life. But if the witness be not believed in his own time, or by later generations—of which his blood is the seed—then the martyr, though his courage be as lofty as ever bore the rack, or his soul be as pure as that of an archangel, is a failure and his memory will perish from among men. The exile has suffered in vain if the State he has founded in the wilderness is fit only to produce other exiles.

The glory of the Pilgrim is that his testimony has been believed and has prevailed. The cause in which he gave it has been won. The verdict has been agreed upon and rendered. Posterity has established it by its mighty and irrevocable judgment.

The Martyrs of Despotism in all ages have been as brave and dauntless as the Martyrs of Liberty. Gerald, the assassin of William the Silent, was as sure that he was doing the will of God as was his victim. He met his death and the terrible torture which preceded it with a courage as undaunted as any hero in history. He fortified himself for his crime by reading the Bible, and by fasting and prayer, and then, full of religious exaltation, dreaming of angels and of Paradise, he departed for Delf. Completing his duty as a good Catholic and faithful subject, he was condemned to have his hand enclosed in a tube, seared with a red-hot iron, and to be torn to pieces with burning pinchers. He showed no sign of terror, no sorrow or surprise. Fixing his dauntless eye on his judges, he repeated with steady face his customary words, "Ecce homo."

The Moslem, the Indian, the Hindoo, meet torture and death with a courage as dauntless as that of the Pilgrim. But the Pilgrim died in the cause of civil and religious liberty, and he won his cause. He encountered exile and death that he might found a State in the government of which every man should have his equal share, and a Church where no human authority might interpose between the soul and its Maker. The State he founded is here, three centuries afterward. It possesses a continent. It gives law to a hemisphere. Within the domain of that State the soul is free. The principles of the Pilgrim pervade the conti-



nent, and are pervading the planet. As the child who goes out, poor and obscure, from his birth-place to seek his fortune, comes back again successful, and honored, and enriched, to the parental dwelling, so the principles of civil liberty under constitutional restraint, which have possessed the American continent from Hudson Bay to Cape Horn, have crossed the Atlantic again to possess the countries of their origin. England is almost a Republic in everything but name. France, after two failures, has become a permanent member of the family of Free States. In Southern and Oriental Seas, where the adventurous ships of our fathers, long after the American Constitution had been framed, found nothing but barbarism and brutality, the great Australasian Commonwealths are rising in splendor and glory, to take, at no distant time, a foremost place in the family of self-governing nations. Japan—that miracle of the East—declared, when she celebrated, last year, her redemption from age-long barbarism, that she owes everything she is to us.

I do not think that the Pilgrim history will ever be repeated. It will not be easy to find the Pilgrim. And in the next place it will not be easy now, with the telegraph, and the telephone, and steam, and electricity, to find the wilderness. And if we can find one, we want it all for the anarchist.

This is the one story to which, for us, or for our children, nothing in human annals may be cited for parallel or comparison, save the story of Bethlehem. There is none other told under Heaven, or among men, like the story of the Pilgrim. Upon this rock is founded our house. Let the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon that house, it shall not fall. The saying of our prophet—our Daniel—is fulfilled. The sons of the Pilgrims have crossed the Mississippi and possess the shores of the Pacific. The tree our fathers set covered at first but a little space by the seaside. It has planted its banyan branches in the ground. It has spread along the Lakes. It has girdled the Gulf. It has spanned the Mississippi. It has covered the prairie and the plain. The sweep of its lofty arches rises over the Rocky Mountains, and the Cascades, and the Nevadas. Its hardy growth shelters the frozen region of the far Northwest

Its boughs hang over the Pacific. So far—so far, it has carried its blessing with it. Self-government, civil and religious freedom, the Compact of the Mayflower, the Declaration of Independence, the American State, the American Home, the American Constitution—these have gone with it, and in good time—in good time—it will send its roots beneath the waves, and receive under its canopy the islands of the sea.

“ Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow  
About the mother tree, a pillared shade  
High over-arched, and echoing walks between.”

These shall go with it also—self-government, civil and religious freedom, the Compact of the Mayflower, the Declaration of Independence, the American State, the American Home, the American Constitution—these shall go with it as its shadow.

American freedom, American self-government, the American home, the American Constitution—these shall follow the American flag till they cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Wherever the son of the Pilgrim goes he will carry with him what the Pilgrim brought from Leyden, the love of liberty, reverence for law, trust in God—a living God—belief in a personal immortality, the voice of conscience in the soul, a heart open to the new truth which ever breaketh from the bosom of the Word. His inherited instinct for the building of States will be as sure as that of the bee for building her cell or the eagle his nest.

I am no blind worshipper of the Past. I do not believe that Renown and Grace are dead. I am no pessimist or alarmist. I am certainly no misanthropist. While there are many men who have served their country better in their generation than I have in mine, I yield to no man in love for the Republic, or in pride in my country, and in my countrymen who are making to-day her honorable history. We may err in our day. Our fathers erred in theirs. Yet our generation is better than those who went before it. The coming generations will be better than we are. The Republic where every man has his share in the government is better than the monarchy, or the oligarchy, or the aristocracy. Our Republic is better than any other Republic. To-day is better

than yesterday, and to-morrow will be better than to-day. But while each generation has its own virtues, each generation has its own dangers, and its own mistakes, and its own shortcomings.

The difference between the generations of any country with a history is commonly not one of principle, but of emphasis. The doctrine of 1776, when we won our independence, planted our country on the eternal principles of equality of individuals and of nations in political rights, and declared that no man and no people had the right to judge of the fitness of any other for self-government. In 1787 the Constitution was builded on the doctrine that there were domains within which the Government had no right to enter, and that there <sup>were</sup> powers which the people would not commit to any authority, State or National. The doctrine of 1861 and the years which followed, declared the natural right of every man to his own freedom, whatever might be his race or color; and the natural right of every man to make his dwelling wherever on the face of the earth he might think fit. These truths will, perhaps, be accepted to-day as generally as they were accepted then. But if accepted at all they are accepted by the intellect only, and not by the heart. They are not much talked about, except to ridicule them, to refine about them, or to find some plausible reason why they should not be applied.

The orator of to-day puts his emphasis on Glory, on Empire, on Power, on Wealth. We live under, and love, and we will shed our heart's blood for the same flag which floated over our fathers, and for which they were ready to die. But it sometimes seems that the flag has a different meaning, whether it float over the Capitol, or the ship-of-war, or the regiment on the march, or the public assembly. We no longer speak of it, except coldly and formally, as the symbol of Liberty; but only as the symbol of power, or of a false, cheap, tinsel glory.

I think the popular reverence for Washington, and Lincoln, and for Sumner, and for Webster is not abated. But few political speakers quote to-day the great sentences which made them so famous, or the great principles to which they devoted their lives.

Justice Harlan, a noble Kentuckian and brave soldier, as well as a great Judge, said in a speech to the Loyal Legion, that "the

heart of the North had grown cold toward the millions of bondsmen whose chains it had broken." I heard an eminent Republican Senator say, not long ago, that he was sorry that we had ever abolished slavery.

But all these things are temporary, and superficial, and cutaneous. The great heart of the American people beats to-day, as ever, for Justice and Liberty. There are times of profound peace and unbroken prosperity, when it seems to the unreflecting view as if everything that was noble had gone from the character of the American people. But it is a grievous mistake. Mr. Choate, as you remember, wrote to a friend out of the country, in 1855: "Your estate is gracious, that keeps you out of our politics. Anything more low, obscene, feculent, the manifold oceanic heavings of history have not cast up. We shall come to the worship of onions, cats, and things vermiculate." Yet six years later the lofty summons came, and the heroic youth of 1861 answered the call. The American people have never cared permanently, and, in their hearts, for military glory; and have never, in their hearts, been greedy for mere empire.

The War of 1812 brought great glory to the Nation. It was crowded with Naval victories. It won for us the freedom of the seas. But there is no statesman who had anything to do with the War of 1812 that is remembered now for the share he had in it. That war left us but one name which may fairly be called illustrious in our military history—the name of Andrew Jackson. And the glory of New Orleans has been, I think, eclipsed by the glory of putting down Nullification.

The War with Mexico won for us a great addition to our Empire, and the dominion of the Pacific. Yet the two Generals who won fame in that war, while both did their full duty as soldiers, both were opposed in opinion to the war. The statesmen of that day, who brought on the war with Mexico, are almost wholly forgotten now, while Webster and Sumner, and Clay and Benton, and Corwin hold their places in the affection of the people, and shine with an undiminished luster. When Theodore Roosevelt chose his hero for the imitation of the youth of America, he passed by Polk and Pierce, and Buchanan and Cushing, and the

other statesmen who brought on the Mexican War. He took Benton for his example, who gave up power and office and popularity to protest against it.

I have sometimes wondered if William Bradford and Brewster, and John Robinson and Carver, and Winthrop ever celebrate the landing of the Pilgrims in the world where they are now dwelling. If they do, I wonder who will be invited to the banquet! Who of later generations will be thought worthy to sit by their side and share the ambrosia of their recollections, and the nectar of their converse? It will be an exclusive society. It will be the very aristocracy of martyrdom. Washington will be there, of course, and Sam Adams and Laurens, and Nathan Hale and Lincoln, and Sumner. With all their faults, they will be glad to see Corwin and old Tom Benton, and Garrison. Toussaint L'Ouverture, who died in a French dungeon for the liberty of his race, will be there. They invite colored men to dinner in that world. Lafayette, who endured the Austrian dungeon for the liberty of the world, will be of the company. Napoleon could not get in, even in company with the dogs, to lick up the crumbs that fall from the table. The deep, sweet voice of Kossuth, the Hungarian exile, orator of two worlds, will be heard there.

I will not undertake to say who of men now living would be counted worthy of that illustrious company. Of living men it would be presumptuous to speak. But perhaps some of those who, in the death struggle of the little Republic in South Africa, did the best fighting that this world has seen since Thermopylae, will be there. Mabini, the author of the State papers which compare with those of our fathers—which won the admiration of Lord Chatham—and of whom I hope our Republic is not afraid, that we keep him in exile at Guam, will be welcome, to discuss with John Winthrop the true boundary between liberty and authority in the State.

But this hour is consecrated to patriotic memories, and to filial love. We are a company of brethren celebrating our Mother's birthday. Let us not dwell on the faults or mistakes of each other. Our Pilgrim and Puritan fathers and mothers were men and women. They had the faults of men and women. But they





are to us the noblest men and women that ever lived. Our countrymen to-day are men and women. They have the faults of men and women. Yet our country is to us the best and the noblest country the earth ever saw, at its best and noblest day. Let us rather remember how we took Cuba by the hand and delivered her from her age-long bondage; how we led hesitating and halting Europe to the relief of her imprisoned Ambassadors in China; how we are at this moment holding our mighty shield over beleaguered Venezuela, while Theodore Roosevelt says to imperial England and haughty Germany: "Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud fleets be stayed." Surely that tree is for the healing of the nations, beneath whose shadow sixteen Republics are dwelling in safety and peace.

The teaching of this Pilgrim celebration for us is, that our country can be great and noble only as she listens to the Pilgrim voice and learns the Pilgrim lesson: "Righteousness exalteth a Nation. He that saveth his life shall lose it." Let us have Liberty, if we have to go into exile to get it. Let us have Justice, though we must dwell in the wilderness to enjoy it. Let us obey God's voice, if we must meet death in his service." Or rather, "Where Liberty is, there can be no exile. Where Justice is, there can be no wilderness. Where God is, there can be no death."







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